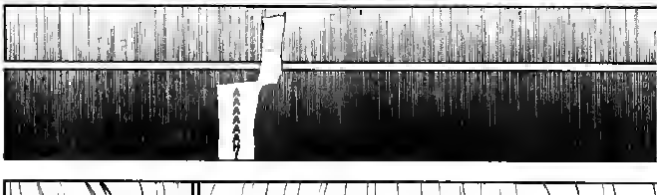
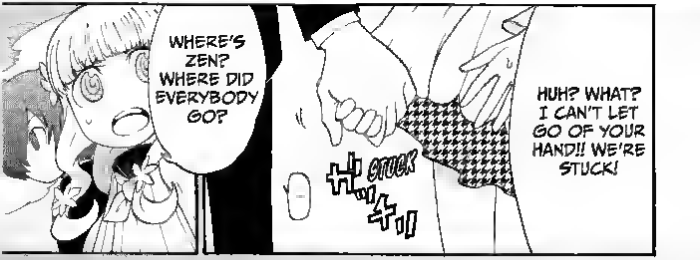
Chapter 10

BAM!!!


AAAAAA!

...?
BLANK

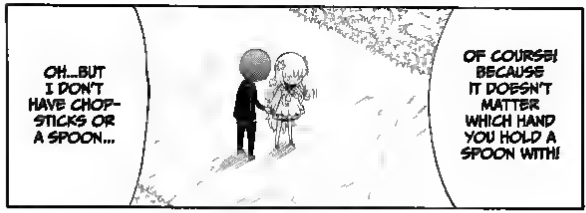
HUH?! WHERE ARE WE?!
OH! I DROPPED ALL MY TAKO-YAKI...
ZEN...
I MEAN, LEADER.
...


WHERE'S ZEN? WHERE DID EVERYBODY GO?
HUH? WHAT? I CAN'T LET GO OF YOUR HAND!! WE'RE STUCK!
STUCK

THIS IS THE PATH WHERE LOVERS WHO HAVE MET THEIR DESTINED PARTNERS SPEAK OF THEIR AFFECTION FOR EACH OTHER.
IT WOULD SEEM YOU TWO HAVE MADE IT HERE AT LAST.

THIS IS THE PATH WHERE LOVERS WHO HAVE MET THEIR DESTINED PARTNERS ARE FILLED WITH ROAST SHOULDER OF LAMB AND NAAN IS SOFT AND FLUFFY DOWN THE HATCH!!
TAKE A KNIFE AND FORK IN EACH HAND, AND WE CAN USE CHOPSTICKS OR NOT?!
THEN I ACCEPT!
WHAT COULD POSSIBLY BE WAITING FOR YOU DOWN THIS ROAD?
TAKE EACH OTHER HAND IN HAND, AND STEP FORWARD WITH CURIOSITY AND FEAR IN YOUR HEARTS. OR CHOOSE NOT TO.

MAYBE WE SHOULD JUST USE A SPOON?
AH!!
GASP...! OH NO! WE CAN'T USE CHOPSTICKS WITH OUR HANDS STUCK TOGETHER!
SO, UM... WE'RE JUST SUPPOSED TO USE CHOPSTICKS? LEAVE IT TO ME! I'M GOOD WITH CHOP...


OH...BUT I DON'T HAVE CHOP-STICKS OR A SPOON...
OF COURSE! BECAUSE IT DOESN'T MATTER WHICH HAND YOU HOLD A SPOON WITH!

?
WHAT'S THAT...?
ANYWAY, LET'S JUST GO ON
OKAY!
OOOH !!
WE LOOK JUST LIKE A PRINCE AND PRINCESS!
LOOK, LOOK AT THAT DRESS! IT'S SO PRETTY!!

I ALWAYS WANTED TO WEAR A DRESS LIKE THAT.
THEY MUST HAVE TAKEN A PICTURE OF A PRINCESS AND PASTED MY FACE OVER HERS!
WOOOOW! IT'S SO PRETTY!

AND THEN, WHEN IT'S ALL OVER, EVERYONE'S HAPPY! AND IT SAYS...AND THUS THEY BECAME LEGENDS... THE END!
THAT'S HOW THE PRINCE HOLDS THE PRINCESS WHEN HE COMES TO TAKE HER AWAY AT THE END OF ALL THE FAIRYTALES!
DO YOU RECOGNIZE THAT POSE? IT'S CALLED A "PRINCESS EMBRACE"

HE WAS SO COOL...
ZEN HELD ME LIKE A PRINCESS WHEN HE RESCUED ME BEFORE!

GUESS WHAT! ZEN ALWAYS HOLDS MY HAND TO MAKE SURE I DON'T GET LOST.
TEE HEE HEE...HE'S SO NICE!
NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, HOLDING HANDS WITH SOMEONE OTHER THAN ZEN FEELS STRANGE, LIKE A NEW MOUTHFEEL...
I MEAN A NEW SENSATION!
FOOM
?!
ZEN IS YOUR PRINCE CHARMING, HUH, REI?
...SO
AND HE'S ALWAYS WITH ME, BUT... BUT I DON'T KNOW...!
FLAIL
FLAIL
AAAH! UM, UM, Z-ZEN IS NICE... AND HE IS HANDSOME...

...M-MY PRINCE CHARMING? YOU THINK SO?
I WOULD LIKE THAT.

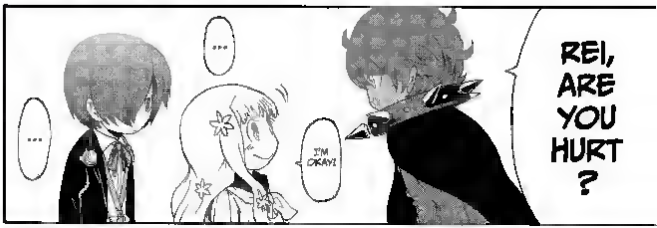
DO YOU THINK THIS IS WHERE THE PARTY IS?
CREAK...
NOW, THE MOMENT YOU'VE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR. THE BRIDE AND GROOM HAVE ENTERED THE BUILDING.

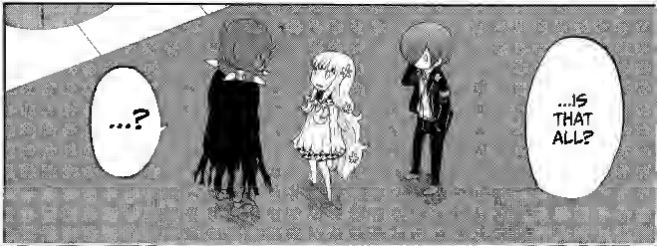
YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO VOW YOUR ETERNAL LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER OF YOUR OWN FREE WILL.
WHAT?!
WHAT?! WHERE'S THE PARTY?! WHERE'S THE ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BUFFET?
YOU TWO MAY NOW BE WED, OR CHOOSE NOT TO.

YOU VOW TO LOVE EACH OTHER IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH.
...
RELEASE !!
Y-YOU MEAN WE'RE THE ONES GETTING MARRIED?

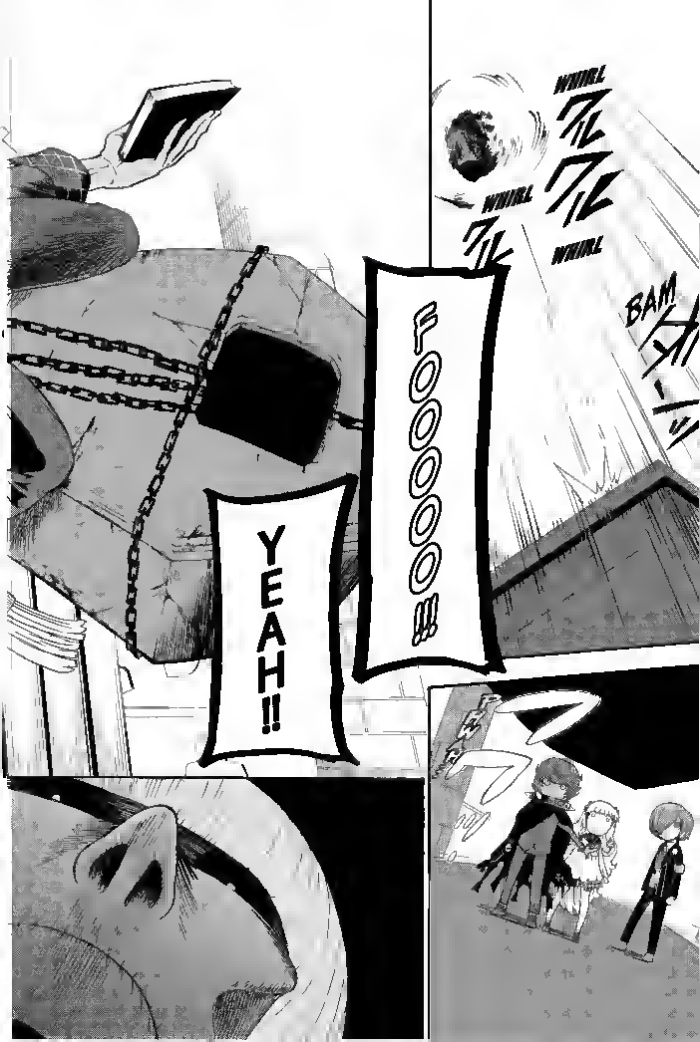
ZEN! ZEEEN !!
W... WAIT!
GO ON! PLEDGE YOUR LOVE!

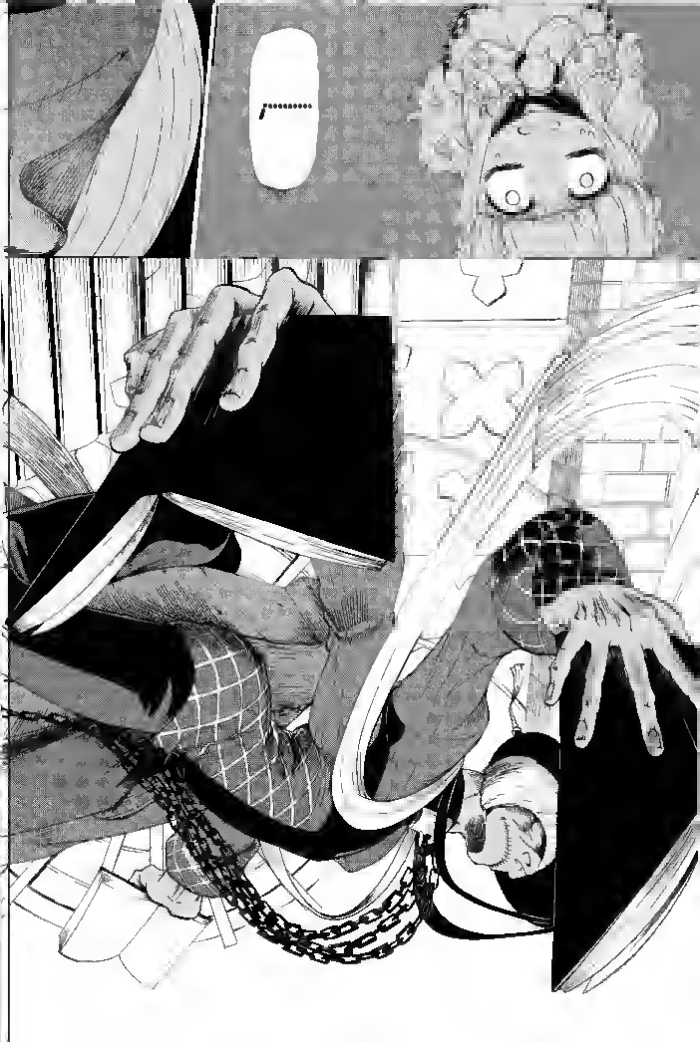
REI!
ZEN...!


...
...
I'M OKAY!
REI, ARE YOU HURT?


...?
...IS THAT ALL?

??
UGH...! ZEN, YOU DUMMY!!
LET US... PRAA- AY...
A PRIEST?
...
LEADER! REI-SAN! ARE YOU UNHURT?!
WATCH OUT! THAT'S ...
A SHADOW!
ZOOM


WHIRL
WHIRL
WHIRL
BAM
FOOOOO!!!
YEAH!!



BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
Oh!!
NO... STAY AWAY FROM ME!!!
LET US... VOOOW...

INSOLENT HEATHENS WHO FLOUT GOD...
I WILL GUIDE YOU, LITTLE SHEEP!
REI, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
WHAT KIND OF A PRIEST IS THIS?!
DON'T LET YOUR GUARD DOWN! THERE'S NO TELLING HOW HE'LL ATTACK NEXT!
YES...

VOW TO ME THAT YOU WON'T STRIKE!
AH!
WHAT ARE THOSE COFFINS FOR?
CHIE-SENPAI!
I CAN'T MAKE THAT PROMISE!
TO-MOE!!
GIVE IT ALL YOU GOT!!
ZSH!

...?!
KA-POP
CYAAAAAH!
ズバッ

YOUR DIVINE
!
PUNISH-MENT
IS DEATH!
GRAAGH
GRAAGH
UH, WHAT?! WHAT'S WRONG?!

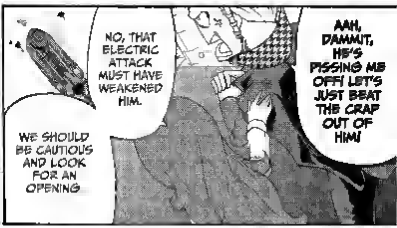
AAA-AUGH! TOMO-EEEE!!!
YAMAGISH!! WHAT ON EARTH DID HE DO?!
WHAM
UM... I THINK THAT WAS A SPELL...
IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S A BAD IDEA TO BREAK THE SHADOW'S VOWS!
BUT I DIDN'T "STRIKE" HIM!!
WELL, I THINK HE MEANT "NO PHYSICAL ATTACKS"...
RISE! DO YOU KNOW THE SHADOW'S WEAKNESS?!
HMM... JUST A SECOND, I ALMOST HAVE IT...!

IT'S WEAK TO ELEC-TRICITY!
GOT IT!
POLY-DEUC-ES!
IZA-NAGI!
VOW TO ME...
ZAP

ZZZAP!
GYAAAAH!
...THAT YOU WON'T USE SKILLS!!
WHAT?!
RETRO-ACTIVE VOWS?! IS THAT ALLOWED ?!
GRRRRRRR
BREAK OUT OF IT! SHOW YOUR FIGHTING SPIRIT!!
GOD, WHAT TO DO!?
GRNG
GRNG

BOO-
BOOM!
AH

IT'S TOO SOON FOR ME TO MEET MY MAKER...
HAVE MERCY ON THIS FATE...


NO, THAT ELECTRIC ATTACK MUST HAVE WEAKENED HIM.
WE SHOULD BE CAUTIOUS AND LOOK FOR AN OPENING.
AAH, DAMMIT, HE'S PISSING ME OFF! LET'S JUST BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF HIM!

JUST VOW TO ME ALL MANNER OF THINGS!

ALL...ALL MANNER? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?! WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO...
...WHAT ...?
NOW, THE LORD'S GUIDANCE !!
LET'S GO TO HEELL !!!

COUGH
RE! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
...YES
I'M OKAY.
NGH...!
ZEN ...?!
LEADER ...!
TEDDIE
EVERY-ONE...!
...

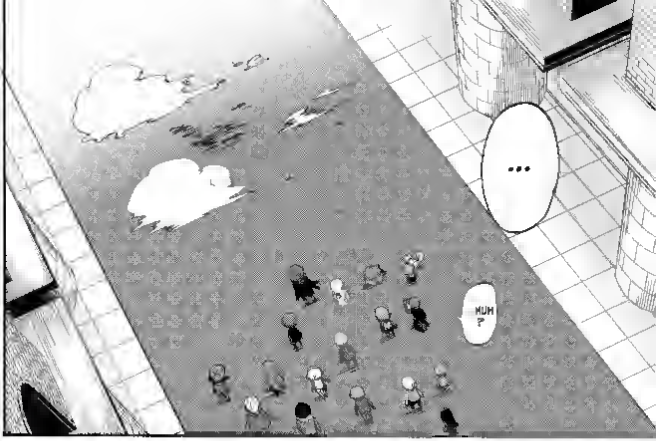
ZEN!
HNGH!
?!
SLAP
BELIEVE, AND YOU WILL BE SAVED!
REI!!!
IF NOT, THE SIN IS THINE!
...
SFF

KNEEEEEN
REI ...
?
BAAAAD LITTLE LAMB!!
I'M HEALED ...

ZEN! ARE YOU OKAY?
YES, THANKS TO YOUR POWER
AAAAAAA
UUGH!
KINTOKI-DOUJI!
VILE SINNERS !! JUST VOW TO ME ALL MANNER OF...
ZUBWAH!!
ボ
ABOOM
ガ
THE ONLY VOWS I CAN BEAR ARE WEDDING VOWS!!
TEDDIE!

?!
?!!
CLAMP
...!

WHAM

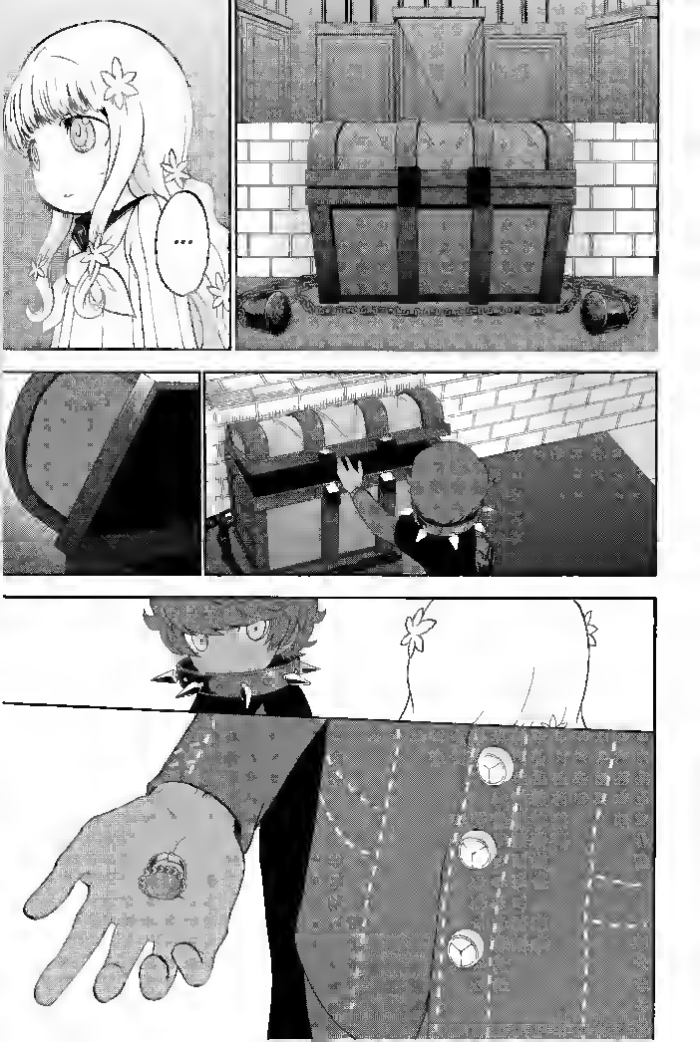

...
HUH?

REI-CHAN USED HER POWER TO HEAL ALL OF YOU!
WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE ALL OKAY!

DON'T TELL ME YOU BEAT THE BOSS WHILE I WAS UNCONSCIOUS AGAIN?
MM-HM! ZEN BEAT HIM!
AND HEY, THAT SHADOW TOTALLY KNOCKED US OUT... BUT WE'RE NOT HURT.

!
ZEN ...?

FOR REAL?! I DON'T REMEMBER IT, BUT THANKS!
AND WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE ONES PROTECTING YOU!
EH HEH HEH...
THANKS.

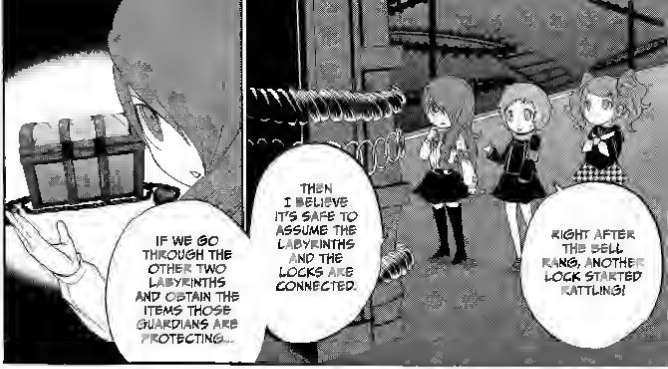


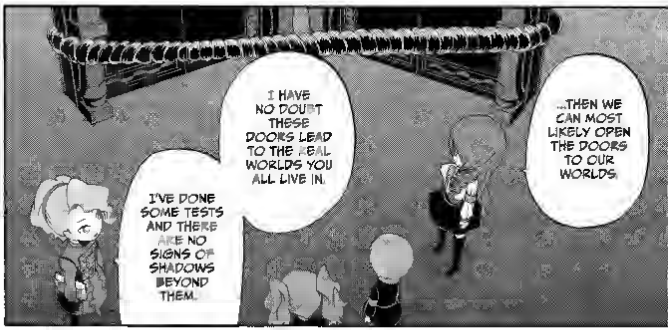
WELL, ZEN? DO YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING?
YES...
I USED TO HAVE ONE, TOO I WAS SO PROUD OF IT--IT MADE ME FEEL LIKE A PRINCESS.
IS IT... A TOY RING? LIKE THE ONES THEY SELL AT FESTIVAL BOOTHS

I WAS SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING IN THIS WORLD... BECAUSE REI WAS CRYING...
BUT I WAS UNABLE TO FIND THAT "SOMETHING"..

DING DONG
DING DONG
THAT'S THE BELL AGAIN.
I DON'T KNOW... I DON'T KNOW.
...REI, THIS RING MUST BELONG TO YOU

EVERYONE! WHEN YOU GET BACK, PLEASE COME STRAIGHT TO THE VELVET ROOM!
!
DING
DING
DING
DING
A LOCK
THEN OUR HYPOTHESIS WAS CORRECT
ANOTHER LOCK IS ABOUT TO COME OFF!
CLANK


IF WE GO THROUGH THE OTHER TWO LABYRINTHS AND OBTAIN THE ITEMS THOSE GUARDIANS ARE PROTECTING...
THEN I BELIEVE IT'S SAFE TO ASSUME THE LABYRINTHS AND THE LOCKS ARE CONNECTED.
RIGHT AFTER THE BELL RANG, ANOTHER LOCK STARTED RATTLING!


I'VE DONE SOME TESTS AND THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF SHADOWS BEYOND THEM.
I HAVE NO DOUBT THESE DOORS LEAD TO THE REAL WORLDS YOU ALL LIVE IN.
...THEN WE CAN MOST LIKELY OPEN THE DOORS TO OUR WORLDS.

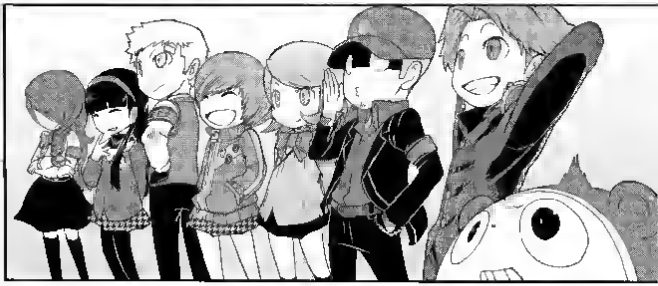
...THIS IS PRETTY EXHAUSTING
SO WE'RE HALFWAY THERE I CAN'T WAIT TO GO TO THE NEXT ONE
AND SOMETHING SMELLS VERY FAMILIAR TO ME PAST THE OTHER ONE.
AND I SENSE A WORLD VERY FAMILIAR TO ME ON THE OTHER SIDE OF ONE OF THE DOORS

DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE ALREADY TIRED, LEADER!
WELL, THERE'S NO NEED TO RUSH
BY THE WAY, I SAW THAT PHOTO OF YOU AND LEADER. IT WAS SO CUTE!
EVEN IF IT WAS DOCTORED.
YOU REALLY DID LOOK JUST LIKE A PRINCESS

YEAH
I ALWAYS WANTED TO WEAR A DRESS LIKE THAT...
YOU WILL.
!

YOU CAN WEAR ONE AFTER WE LEAVE THIS PLACE.

...MM-HM!



LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.
ALL OF US, TOGETHER.
SQUEEZE
ぎゅっ

Thanks for reading!
Please look forward to
So Tobita-sensei's next series!